



Organization and Operations Manual

Kansas State StormReady Advisory Board

National Weather Service

November 28, 2000



StormReady Organization and Operations Manual

Kansas

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Section 1.0 StormReady Overview

Many laws and regulations have been created to help local emergency managers deal with hazardous material spills, search and rescue operations, medical crises, etc., but there are relatively few uniformly-recognized standards dealing with the specifics of hazardous weather response operations. Recognizing this need, the National Weather Service (NWS), has designed a program to help cities, counties, and towns implement procedures to reduce the potential for disastrous, weather-related, consequences. By participating in this program, called "StormReady", local agencies can earn recognition for their jurisdiction by meeting criteria established by the NWS in partnership with federal, state, and local emergency management professionals. The StormReady program is intended to:

- , Improve the timeliness and effectiveness of hazardous weather warnings for the public.
- , Provide detailed and clear recommendations by which local emergency managers may establish/improve effective hazardous weather operations.
- , Help local emergency managers justify costs and purchases related to supporting their hazardous weather-related program.
- , Reward local hazardous-weather mitigation programs that have achieved a desired performance level.
- , Provide a means of acquiring additional Community Rating System points assigned by the Insurance Services Organization (ISO). (This is currently under consideration by ISO officials.)
- , Provide an "image incentive" to counties, cities, and towns that can identify themselves as being "StormReady"
- , Encourage the enhancement of hazardous weather preparedness programs in jurisdictions surrounding "StormReady" Communities and Counties.

StormReady is a voluntary program, and is being offered as a means of providing guidance and incentive to officials interested in improving their respective hazardous weather operations. **Implied or explicit references to "requirements" are made with regard to the voluntary participants in the StormReady program and should not be construed as being state or federal mandates.**

StormReady

National Organization

Section 2.0

StormReady Advisory Board Organization

Implementation and oversight of the StormReady program is completed through the formation of StormReady Advisory Boards. Advisory boards shall be set up on a national, regional and local basis.

Section 2.1

National StormReady Advisory Board

The National StormReady Advisory Board is responsible for general oversight of the StormReady program. The primary mission of the national board is to maintain a “**minimum**” set of recognition criteria that is consistent across the country with regard to technology, while at the same time allowing for local flexibility in terms of planning and preparedness activities.

Existing and proposed criteria are reviewed at the National StormReady Advisory Board's annual meeting, with updated criteria formally published by the board on or before October 1st of each federal fiscal year.

The National StormReady Advisory Board is comprised of:

- NWS Warning Coordination Meteorologist (WCM) Program Leader (NWSH)
- NWS Eastern Region WCM Program Leader
- NWS Southern Region WCM Program Leader
- NWS Central Region WCM Program Leader
- NWS Western Region WCM Program Leader
- NWS Alaska Region WCM Program Leader
- NWS Pacific Region WCM Program Leader

President (or designee) of the National Emergency Management Association (NEMA)

President (or designee) of the International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM)

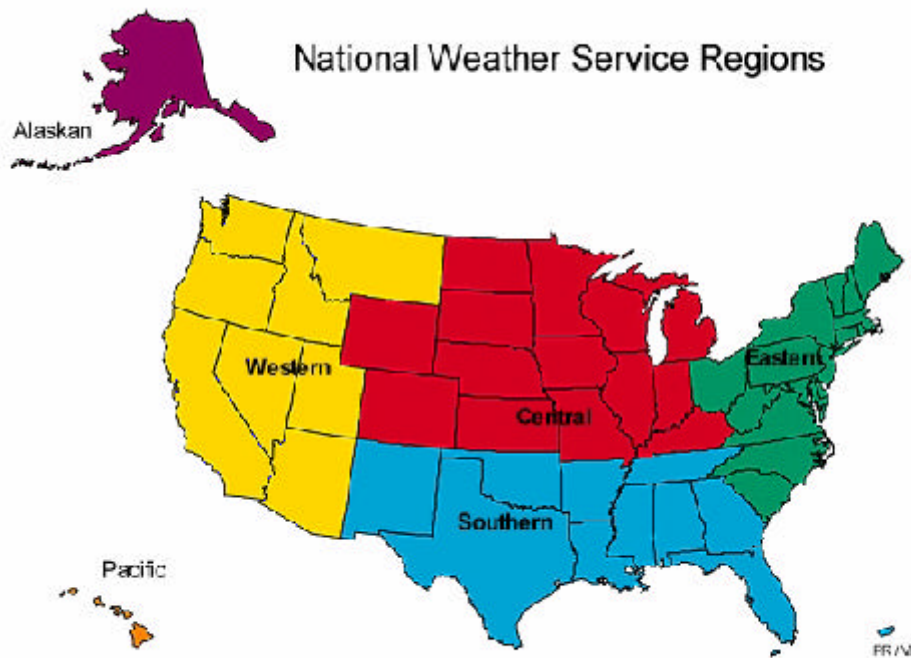
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Section 2.2

Regional StormReady Advisory Board

Each of the NWS's six regional offices shall establish Regional StormReady Advisory Board. Team membership shall be determined by the Regional Director.

Regional StormReady Advisory Boards shall monitor the activities of local boards and ensure the spirit of the national criteria is maintained. Regional boards also collect and review proposed criteria change recommendations received from the Local StormReady Advisory Boards. Recommendations for change to the national criteria shall be forwarded to the National StormReady Advisory Board for consideration.



Section 2.3
Kansas StormReady Area

Seven National Weather Service Offices provide warnings and forecasts for the state of Kansas. The Kansas StormReady area includes all counties in the state. See Appendix A.

Section 2.4

Kansas State StormReady Advisory Board

The Kansas State StormReady Advisory Board is comprised of:

- > **Meteorologists in Charge** from NWS Offices in Topeka, Wichita, Goodland, Dodge City, Hastings NE, Springfield MO, and Pleasant Hill MO.
- > **Warning Coordination Meteorologists** from NWS Offices in Topeka, Wichita, Goodland, Dodge City, Hastings NE, Springfield MO, and Pleasant Hill MO.
- > Representatives from **Kansas Division of Emergency Management**
- > Representatives from **Kansas Emergency Management Association**
- > **One Emergency Manager Member at Large**

The board will have a position of “Member-at-Large” and it shall be filled by a member from Emergency Management. The Member-at-Large will be appointed by the board and will serve a term of two years. The board may re-appoint the same person for an additional term(s) if the board chooses to do so.

This cross-section of officials gives the Kansas StormReady Board representation from local, state, and federal agencies that deal directly with disaster planning and emergency hydrometeorological situations (Appendix B).

Section 2.5

Kansas StormReady Board By-Laws

Each member of the board serves until resignation or replacement by the appointing agency / association. A chairperson shall be elected from the members on the Advisory Board, by a simple majority vote, to serve for two years. The chairperson shall be responsible for:

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- A. Coordinating most board activities, such as arranging board meetings, processing and distributing applications, arranging site visits, notifying board members on relevant StormReady information, keeping up-to-date on national and regional StormReady changes.
- B. Notifying regional StormReady officials when a community/county has gained StormReady approval, or no longer meets StormReady criteria.
- C. Maintains an appropriate record system pertaining to the advisory board business, meetings, transactions, applications, site visit, voting etc.
- D. Accomplishes and/or delegates advisory board tasks, as necessary.

The Kansas StormReady Board shall work on a calendar year basis and meet at least once a year in person. This meeting should be near the end of the year, and should consider reviewing current criteria with the board publishing new criteria, if needed, by January 1 of the coming year. (National criteria guidelines are published on October 1 of each year.)

Board actions shall be decided by a vote of all members. Members unable to attend a board meeting may send a representative with a proxy vote, or vote remotely (telephone, electronic-mail, etc.) within 5 working days of the meeting. Votes of approval, disapproval and no-opinion may be cast. A single vote of disapproval shall defeat the proposal. Members unable to cast a vote within 5 working days shall forfeit their vote.

Changes/amendments to the by-laws should be submitted to the advisory board chairperson, in writing, for distribution to all advisory board members. The chairperson shall initiate a discussion and/or dialogue on the proposed changes/amendments, and after sufficient time, call for a vote. A majority vote of two-thirds of the advisory board is necessary to implement a change/amendment of the by-laws.

Section 3.0

Kansas StormReady Application Process

Application for StormReady recognition is a formal process requiring a written application, a verification visit, local board action and as required, regional board recognition.

Section 3.1

Application Submission

Any county or community in the Kansas desiring to be considered for StormReady recognition should prepare a written application following the categories outlined in Appendix D, and submit it to the NWS office with warning and forecast responsibility for their jurisdiction. The NWS offices addresses are located in Appendix B.

Some applicants will have jurisdiction over both communities and the unincorporated areas of the surrounding county. In these cases, a single application is sufficient with

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the combined populations used as a basis for determining the appropriate criteria categories for the lead applicant. The other entities in the application will be assessed based on their individual population.

While much of the application is a basic accounting of technology, a brief narrative describing aspects of preparedness and planning activities is necessary and will aid in assessing such things as the hazardous weather plan, exercises and public safety programs.

The NWS office that receives the application will then forward it to the StormReady Advisory Board Chairperson, who will duplicate and provided it to each board member. The StormReady Chairperson shall assign a team to visit the applicant and formally discuss the application.

Section 3.2

Kansas StormReady Verification Visit

A verification team of no less than 2 members shall be assembled by the StormReady Advisory Board Chairperson to visit an applicant. The verification team should be composed of at least a NWS person and a minimum of one emergency manager. Members of a Kansas StormReady verification team should be a member of the StormReady Advisory Board, or other individuals who have been present during previous verification visits and in the opinion of the StormReady Board is qualified to make an assessment.

During the verification visit, a Site Visit Summary (Appendix E) shall be completed separately and signed by each member of the team. During the site visit, a review of the applicant's hazardous weather plan will occur. This review may require the applicant to explain procedures to ensure that the content meets StormReady Criteria. A full copy of the applicant's Hazardous Weather Plan does not need to be submitted to the Kansas StormReady Advisory Board; however, the verification team may request a copy for further review.

Upon completion of a site visit, the review team shall forward their findings to the StormReady Advisory Board Chairperson within 30 days. The Chairperson shall then distribute the teams summaries and findings to the remainder of the Advisory Board members. While the visitation team does not formally make recommendations concerning an applicant's recognition, the comments and findings forwarded to the StormReady Advisory Board are crucial to process and are the foundation for all decisions made.

Section 3.3

Kansas StormReady Board Review

The Kansas StormReady Board shall review a jurisdiction's application and associated site visit summaries as soon as possible after the site visit. The StormReady Advisory Board may approve an application for recognition after this first review.

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If the recognition is not approved, the Board shall provide written guidance on improvements needed to achieve recognition. Upon written response from the applying jurisdiction, a subsequent StormReady verification visit and Board review shall be scheduled. If a community disputes a decision made by the Kansas StormReady Advisory Board, the dispute shall be forwarded to the Regional StormReady Advisory Board for resolution.

Section 3.4

StormReady Criteria Policy Statements

During the course of the Advisory Board's review of applications, it is necessary for the Board to make judgements concerning unique technologies, procedures and situations.

These judgements must be made in terms of StormReady criterion (Appendix C) for the purposes of determining an applicants request for recognition.

The following policy statements are made for the record by the Kansas StormReady Advisory Board and are subject to annual revision:

Emergency operations centers (EOCs) are, for the purposes of the StormReady Program, formal command and control facilities and are not evaluated on their level of protection, survivability or livability.

- < Mobile command facilities can not take the place of an EOC.
- < EOCs and warning points (WPs) can be colocated but each must be equipped to meet StormReady criteria.
- < Meteorological instruments need not be at the EOC or WP, but must be continuously monitored at the EOC or WP.
- < Participation in the Kansas warning dissemination network where National Weather Service information is relayed by state agencies to local warning points is recognized by the StormReady Board as a means of receiving National Weather Service information.
- < When several jurisdictions apply jointly for StormReady recognition, written mutual aid agreements or recognition by the state emergency management agency must be in place to document the authority of an EOC and WP to act for all of the jurisdictions in the application. Note that each jurisdiction must still independently meet all other applicable StormReady criteria.
- < EOCs and WPs do not have to be located in the community they serve as long as their ability to carry out their duty is not impaired.

Section 4.0

The Recognition Process

When, in the opinion of the StormReady Advisory Board, an applicant has met the criteria for recognition, the Board has the authority to grant recognition. Notification of recognition shall be given to the National and Regional Advisory Boards. The chairperson will notify the NWS MIC in which the jurisdiction resides of the recognition approval.

The successful applicant will receive a formal notification letter from the appropriate MIC of the servicing NWS office, two StormReady signs suitable for display along roadways, authorization to use the StormReady logo, instructions for acquiring additional roadway signs, and information concerning the notification of the Insurance Services Organization (ISO) for possible adjustment to insurance rates (Section 3.8).

Recognition shall be for a period of two years from the date of the formal announcement. See Section 6.10 for details concerning re-recognition.

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Section 4.1

Recognition Ceremony

Details of the recognition announcement and ceremony shall be coordinated between the applicant and the appropriate NWS office serving the area.

A typical ceremony would require a formal media announcement and should be a combination of the unveiling of the StormReady roadway signs and a subsequent press conference. See Appendix G for a sample ceremony program.

Section 5.0

Insurance Services Organization (ISO)

Recognized jurisdictions participating in the National Flood Insurance Program can receive Community Rating Points (CRS) towards lowering flood insurance rates. StormReady communities / counties should forward a copy of their recognition letter to their ISO representative for details.

Section 6.0

Recognition Monitoring

While a formal plan to monitor an accredited jurisdiction is not presently deemed necessary, if a formal concern is brought to the StormReady Advisory Board, the Board shall review the concern, and holds the option to suspend the recognition for 60 days while a review is conducted.

If the Board review indicates the community or county no longer meets StormReady criteria, it will request the road signs be removed. A written notification shall be made to the ISO informing them of the action.

Section 6.1

Re-Recognition

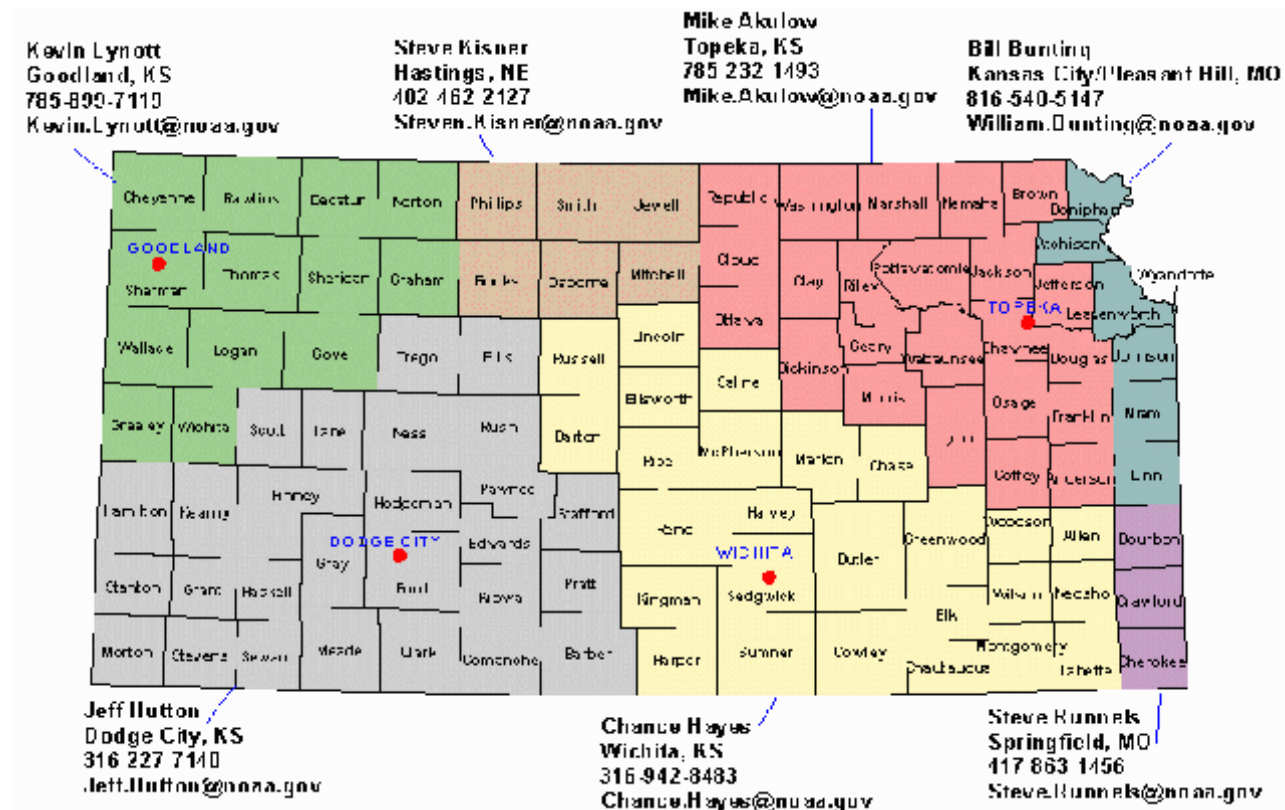
StormReady recognitions are valid for two years from the date of the formal announcement / ceremony. The StormReady Advisory Board shall, six months prior to the expiration of the recognition, notify accredited jurisdictions in writing of their need to re-apply. Applicable criteria shall be those in effect at the time of the notification, and not necessarily the time of the recognition anniversary.

It is the goal of the Kansas StormReady Advisory Board to maintain an atmosphere of constant improvement, and strive to keep the evaluation criteria representative of the advancing technology and techniques.

Appendix A

Kansas NWS County Warning Areas and Contact Information

The County Warning Areas and contacts of the seven NWS offices serving Kansas are indicated by the following map:



Appendix B
Kansas
Advisory Board



StormReady
Members

Co-Chairmen:
Mike Akulow, WCM

Chuck Magaha, Director

National Weather Service
1116 Strait Ave
Topeka, KS 66616-1698

Leavenworth KS Emergency Management
County Courthouse
Leavenworth, KS 66048

Advisory Board Members:

Larry Ruthi, MIC
Jeff Hutton, WCM
National Weather Service
104 Airport Rd
Dodge City, KS 67801-9351

Steve Schurr, MIC
Steve Kisner, WCM
National Weather Service
6365 North Osborne Drive West
Hastings, NE 68901-9163

Richard Elder, MIC
Chance Hayes, WCM
National Weather Service
2142 Tyler Road
Wichita, KS 67209-3016

Curtis Holderbach, MIC
National Weather Service
1116 NE Strait Ave
Topeka, KS 66616-1698

Scott Mentzer, MIC
Kevin Lynott, WCM
National Weather Service
920 Armory Road
Goodland, KS 67735-9273

Bill Davis, MIC
Steve Runnels, WCM
National Weather Service
Springfield-Branson Regional Airport
5805 West Highway EE
Springfield, MO 65802-8400

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Appendix B - Continued

Kansas StormReady Advisory Board Members

Lynn Maximuk, MIC
Bill Bunting, WCM
National Weather Service
1803 North 7 Highway
Pleasant Hill, MO 64080

Gene Krase, Deputy Director
Ida Kirmse, Senior Planner/Hazard Mitigation
Sandy Johnson, Operations Officer
Kansas Division of Emergency Management
State Defense Building
2800 SW Topeka Blvd.
Topeka, KS 66611-1287

LaVon Walters, Coordinator
Grant County Emergency Management
108 South Glenn St.
Ulysses, KS 67880-2551

Jim Schmidt, Coordinator
Butler County Emergency Management
PO Box 911
Andover, KS 67002-0911

StormReady Population-Based Guidelines/Criterion

Since the tax base typically dictates the resources applied to public programs, the guidelines for successful participation in the StormReady Program are based on population. Four population categories will be used for developing appropriate recognition guidelines related to weather disaster preparedness. The population-based categories are:

Guidelines/Criterion	Population			
	< 2,500	2,500 - 14,999	15,000 - 40,000	> 40,000
Guideline 1: Communications				
Established 24 hr Warning Point (WP)	Yes*	Yes*	Yes	Yes
Established Emergency Operations Center		Yes*	Yes	Yes
Ability to relay real-time storm reports to NWS office	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Guideline 2: NWS Information Reception				
Number of ways for EOC/WP to receive NWS warning, etc (If in range, one must be NWR)	3	4	4	4
Guideline 3: Hydrometeorological Monitoring				
Number of ways to monitor Hydrometeorological data.	1	2	3	4
Guideline 4: Local Warning Dissemination				
Number of ways for EOC/WP to disseminate warnings	1	2	3	4
NWR receivers in public facilities	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Guideline 5: Community Preparedness				
Number of annual weather safety talks	2	3	4	6
Spotters and dispatchers trained biennially	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Host / co-host annual NWS spotter training				Yes
Guideline 6: Administrative				
Formal hazardous weather operations plan	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Biennial visits by emergency manager to NWS office	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Annual visits by NWS official to community	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

* If the population of a "community" is less than 15,000, they are required to have a 24 hour warning point and EOC, only if the

county seat is less than 40,000.

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KANSAS

StormReady Guidelines

Guideline 1: Communications & Coordination Center

The key to disaster management is effective communication. This is especially true in natural hazard emergencies (e.g. flood, tornado) where rapid changes may permit only short lead-time warnings that require an immediate, educated response.

1. 24-Hour Warning Point. To receive recognition under the StormReady Program, an applying agency will need to have a 24-hour warning point (WP) that can receive NWS information and provide to the NWS local reports and advice. Typically, this might be a law enforcement or fire department dispatching point. For cities or towns without a local dispatching point, a county agency could act in that capacity for them.

The warning point will need to have:

- < 24 hour operations.
- < Warning reception capability.
- < Warning dissemination capability.
- < Ability and authority to activate local warning system(s).

2. Emergency Operations Center. Agencies serving jurisdictions larger than 2,500 people will need an emergency operations center (EOC). The EOC will need to be staffed during hazardous weather events and, when staffed, would assume the warning point's hazardous weather functions.

The following summarizes the weather-related roles of an EOC:

- < May assume weather-related duties of warning point, when staffed.
- < Activated based on predetermined guidelines related to NWS information and/or weather events.
- < Staffed with emergency management director or designee.
- < Warning reception capability. (See guideline 2)
- < Ability and authority to activate local warning system(s). Must have capabilities equal to or better than the warning point.
- < Ability to communicate with adjacent EOCs/Warning Points.
- < Established communications link with NWS to relay real time weather information to support



the warning decision making process.

- < Where applicable, a backup form of communications to regular telephone service, e.g. NAWAS, Amateur Radio Network, Local Business Band Radio, County Hotline Radio and others, be encouraged, maintained and utilized on a regular basis for establishing a communications link with the NWS.

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StormReady Guidelines (continued)

Guideline 2: National Weather Service Warning Reception

Warning points and EOCs each need multiple ways to receive NWS warnings. The StormReady Program guidelines for receiving NWS warnings in an EOC/WP require a combination of the following, based on population:

- < NOAA Weather Radio receiver, if within range, with tone alert. Specific Area Message Encoding is preferred. Required for recognition.
- < Emergency Management Weather Information Network (EMWIN) receiver: Satellite feed and/or VHF radio transmission of NWS products.
- < Statewide law enforcement telecommunications: Automatic relay of NWS products on law enforcement systems.
- < Amateur Radio transceiver: Potential communications directly to NWS office
- < Pagers: From a provider not directly tied to a local system such as EMWIN.
- < Television: Local network or cable TV.
- < Local Radio (Emergency Alert System - LP1/LP2).
- < National Warning System (NAWAS) drop: FEMA-controlled civil defense hotline.
- < NOAA Weather Wire drop: Satellite downlink data feed from NWS
- < Other: For example, active participation in a state-run warning network.

Guideline 3: Hydrometeorological Monitoring

While receipt of warnings is crucial to the success of any EOC or warning point, there should also be a means of monitoring weather information, especially radar data. To obtain StormReady recognition, each EOC/WP (based on population) should have some combination of the following recommended means of gathering

ancillary weather information:

- < Access to local radar data (via LDAD, internet, local TV, vendor etc.)
- < Instruments, i.e. wind equipment, river gages etc, to provide a measure of local conditions and/or hydrologic conditions (cannot be the sole means of hydrometeorological monitoring)
- < Locally owned and operated weather radar.

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StormReady Guidelines

Guideline 4: Warning Dissemination

Once NWS warnings are received, or local information suggests an imminent weather threat, the goal of the local emergency officials should be to communicate with as much of the population as possible. Receiving StormReady recognition will be contingent upon having one or more of the following means (based on population) of ensuring timely warning dissemination to citizens:

- > NWR receivers (Tone alert or SAME) in each government-owned building that is accessed by the public.

Required locations

24 hour warning point
Emergency Operations Center
City Hall
School Superintendent office

Recommended locations

Courthouses
Public Libraries
Hospitals
All schools
Fairgrounds
Parks and recreation area
Public utilities
Sports arenas
Dept's of Transportation

If a Weather Radio receiver is not available in the government-owned building, another communications/monitoring system/device that relays NWS watch and warning information, in the "**spirit**" of Weather Radio, is acceptable. However, ongoing placement of Weather Radios in government-owned buildings is highly encouraged for re-certification.

- > Cable television audio/video overrides.
- > Local Flood warning systems with no single point of failure.
- > Other locally-controlled methods like a local broadcast system or sirens on emergency vehicles.
- > Outdoor warning sirens.
- > **Counties Only:** A County-wide communications network that ensures the flow of information between all cities and towns within its borders. This would include acting as a warning point for the smaller towns.

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StormReady Guidelines (Continued)

Guideline 5: Community Preparedness

Public education is vital in preparing citizens to respond properly to weather threats. An educated public most likely will take steps to receive weather warnings, recognize potentially threatening weather situations, and act appropriately to those situations. Those seeking recognition in the StormReady Program will need to:

- < Conduct or facilitate seasonal weather safety presentations that include all local weather hazards for schools, civic clubs, media, healthcare facilities, business, fairs, industries and other appropriate groups. (number of talks per year will be based on population).
- < Accomplish weather-related safety campaigns which include publicity for NOAA Weather Radios where coverage exists. These may be a part of multi-hazard presentations affecting local communities/regions (e.g. flood, tornado, winter weather etc)
- < EOC/Warning point staff and storm spotters will need to attend NWS storm spotter training sessions at least every other year. All jurisdictions larger than 40,000 people will need to host/co-host a spotter training session every year.

Guideline 6: Administrative

No program can be successful without formal planning and pro-active administration. To be recognized in the StormReady Program:

Approved hazardous weather action plans will need to be in place. These plans will need to address, at a minimum, the

following:

- < Warning point procedures relating to natural hazards.
 - < EOC activation criteria and procedures if applicable
 - < Storm spotter activation criteria and reporting procedures if applicable.
 - < Storm spotter roster and training record if applicable.
 - < Criteria and procedures for activation of sirens, cable television override, and/or local systems activation in accordance with state Emergency Alert System (EAS) plans.
-
- < Annual exercises relating to natural hazards.

To facilitate close working relationships, the community/county emergency management program leader will need to visit the supporting NWS office at least every other year. NWS officials will commit to visit accredited counties, cities, and towns annually to tour EOCs/Warning points and meet with key officials.